5

Prayer

(This lesson is designed to teach us the basics of prayer and inspire us to develop a strong personal life of prayer).

Prayer Is Communion with God

Prayer is simply communion with God—you talking to God, expressing your heart to God and God revealing His heart to you. It is a two-way communication.

Prayer is God's invitation to a place of intimacy with Him

Luke 11:1
Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

Luke 18:1
Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.

God set up the system of prayer. God calls us to pray so that we can become intimate with Him, know Him, wait upon Him and be renewed by His strength. God has promised to answer.

Jesus Himself is our greatest example of being a man of prayer.

Mark 1:35
Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Luke 6:12
Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Since prayer is a spiritual activity—the posture in prayer does not matter. You can kneel, sit or stand. We do not need to use the rosary in prayer. We do not have to venerate a saint in prayer. We do not need a picture, image or idol to use in prayer. We do not use vain repetitions and chants in prayer. We don't just read a prayer out of a prayer book without our heart in it.

God hears us when we pray

1 Peter 3:12
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

Jeremiah 29:12
Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

Psalm 65:2
O You who hear prayer, to You all flesh will come.

Proverbs 15:29
The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Psalm 141:2
Let my prayer be set before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

God promises to answer when we pray

Matthew 7:7-11
"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

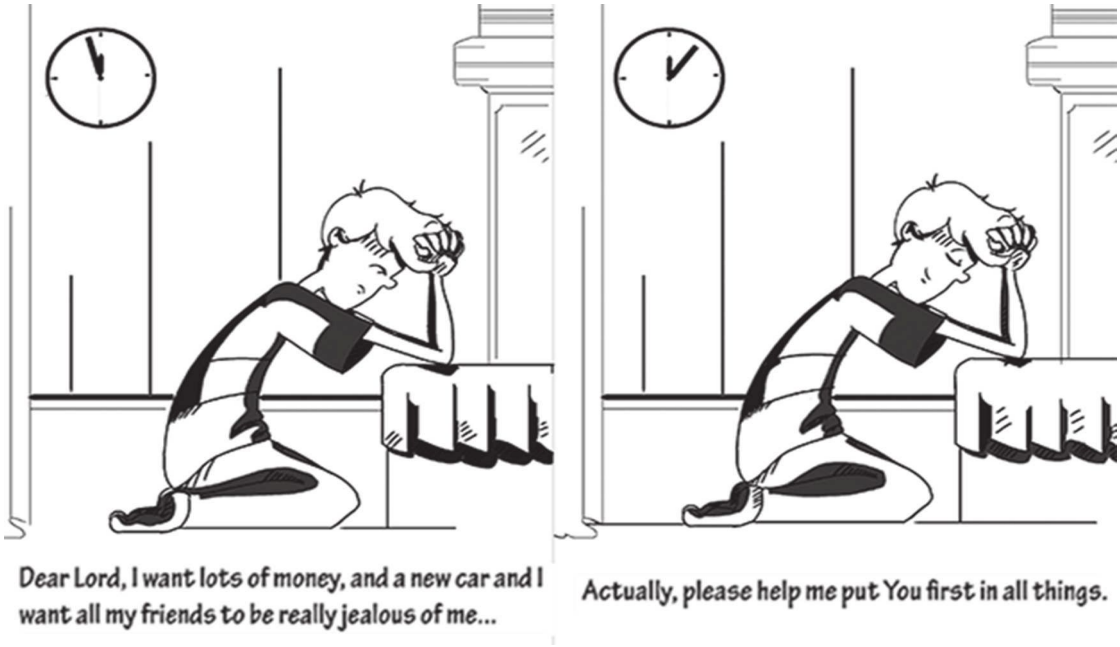
Matthew 21:22
And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.

God desires for us to come to a place in prayer, where every prayer we pray, is answered. Jesus is our Standard—our Model. He never prayed a prayer that went unanswered.

Any failure in prayer can never be attributed to God. Any failure in prayer has to do with man's side of things. Often, we have to accept that we cannot explain why some prayers did not produce outcomes we expected or in the time we expected. We do not change "truth" in an attempt to explain our failure. We accept the fact that we are still learning how to pray effectively. So, in spite of all failures, we continue in our journey in prayer, adhering to the truths concerning prayer as revealed in God's Word.

Prayer changes us

- Our strength is renewed.
- Our wills becomes aligned to His will.
- Our desires and affections change.



Prayer is partnering with God in shaping the world around us and creating history

- God intervenes in our situations.
- Prayer is us partnering with God, inviting God to establish His rule and dominion in our world.

What Can I Do in Prayer?

Why pray?

Prayer is such a privilege that we cannot overlook or neglect the exercise of prayer.

Matthew 6:9-13
In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- Pray to commune with Him: *Our Father in heaven*
- Pray to adore, worship and honor Him: *Hallowed be Your name.*
- Pray His rule and dominion on the earth: *Your kingdom come.*
- Pray His will, purpose, and plan to be established: *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*
- Pray for all needs—spiritual, emotional, physical, financial and other needs: *Give us this day our daily bread.*
- Pray for forgiveness and cleansing: *And forgive us our debts,*
- Pray to forgive others: *As we forgive our debtors.*
- Pray to overcome temptation: *And do not lead us into temptation,*
- Pray to overcome and triumph over demonic opposition: *But deliver us from the evil one.*
- Pray to give God all the glory and praise: *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Different Types of Prayer

Ephesians 6:18
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

This implies praying always with all kinds of prayer.

I Timothy 2:1
Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

We see here different expressions of prayer: supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks and so on.

Some of the kinds of prayer we see in Scripture are:

Prayer of asking and receiving

This is the kind of prayer we use when we want to ask and receive something specific from God.

Matthew 7:7-11
"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Mark 11:24
Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

John 16:23, 24
"And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

This is what we do when we wish to express our gratitude to God or express faith in God concerning a thing we consider done, even before seeing it in the natural.

I Timothy 2:1
Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.

Philippians 4:6
Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Romans 4:20
He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God.

Prayer of Consecration

This is what we use when we are in a posture of surrender and yielding our will to God's directive and leading.

Matthew 26:37-44
And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

Prayer of Agreement

This is what we do when praying along with others for a specific matter to be established on earth.

Matthew 18:19
Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

Acts 1:14
These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:1
When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 4:2
Being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

Prayer of Repentance/Confession

This is what we use when we acknowledge our wrong doing and by faith receive God's forgiveness and cleansing.

I John 1:7-9
But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Prayer of Intercession/Praying for others

Ephesians 6:18
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

I Timothy 2:1
Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.

Job 9:32
For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together.

Job 16:21
Oh, that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleads for his neighbor!

Prayer in the Spirit (in tongues)

I Corinthians 14:2, 15, 28
For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

Prayer of Faith for Healing

James 5:14
Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

Prayer of Commissioning—when appointing or releasing people into ministry

Acts 13:3
Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Acts 14:23
So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Prayer of Communion/Fellowship

This prayer is when you are simply sharing your heart/thoughts/feelings with God and tuning in to what He shares with you.

Psalm 62:8
Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.

I John 1:3
That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

These different kinds of prayer—each serve different purposes and may be used at different times (in different situations).

There are different 'rules' that govern different types of prayer—that is, we do not pray all kinds of prayer the same way.

Foundations for Prayer

There are 3 key foundations for prayer:

- Knowing who God is—knowing the nature of God.
- Knowing who you are in Christ—the privileges and authority you have in Christ.
- Faith—knowing how to receive by faith in God.

Knowing who God is

We need to know who God is—His nature in order to pray accurately.

We know God, His nature and attributes through His Word.

When you know who God is, it is easy for you to pray according to what He would purpose.

Knowing who you are in Christ

We need to know the privileges and authority we have in Christ.

This gives us confidence in prayer—before God, and in the midst of adversity.

Prayer is one of the ways we exercise our authority on the earth.

Faith

James 1:5-7
If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

We need to believe (have faith) that we will receive in order to see the results of our prayers.

How to Pray the "Prayer of Asking and Receiving"

We now discuss the "how to" or guidelines of the most common kind of praying all of us normally do.

Pray to the Father in Jesus' Name

John 16:23,24
And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Address your prayer to the Father in the name of Jesus.

We do not have to pray to any saint, priest or Mary.

It is perfectly fine to talk directly to Jesus and the Holy Spirit, because we fellowship with the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:9) and with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Pray according to God's revealed will

1 John 5:14, 15
Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

James 4:3
You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

We know God's revealed will from His written Word and based on who He is.

In life-situations where we do not know the will of God, we attempt to first discern His will by the inner leading of His Spirit, through godly wisdom and counsel, and then pray in accordance with what He reveals to us.

Pray with a clear conscience

Psalm 66:18
If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.

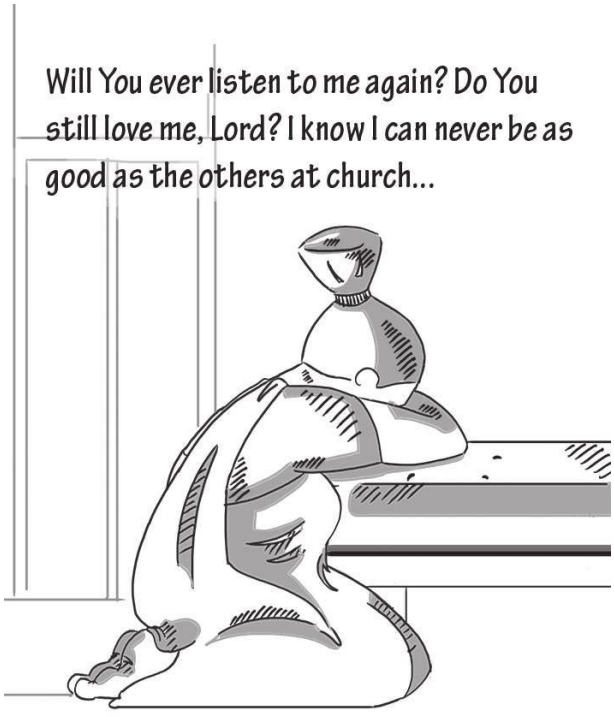
1 John 3:21, 22
Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Pray with Faith—Believe that you have received

Mark 11:24
Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

Hebrews 11:1, 2
Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

Faith enables us to settle a matter in our hearts, even before we see any change/evidence in the natural realm.



Romans 4:17-21
As it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations" in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Abraham, praying according to God's promise for his life is a great example.

Continue in faith with patience and thanksgiving

Hebrews 6:12
That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 10:35, 36
Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

Philippians 4:6, 7
Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We may not see things happen instantly in the natural realm, all the time. This is when we have to continue with faith and patience, all the while being thankful and rejoicing in the outcome, even though we have not seen the result yet.

Sometimes it could be demonic hindrances that delay the answers.

Daniel 10:12, 13
Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.

Sometimes God is getting us, our circumstances, people around us ready (prepared) to receive the answer for our prayer, and this preparation may take some time.

Be fervent, not flippant in your asking

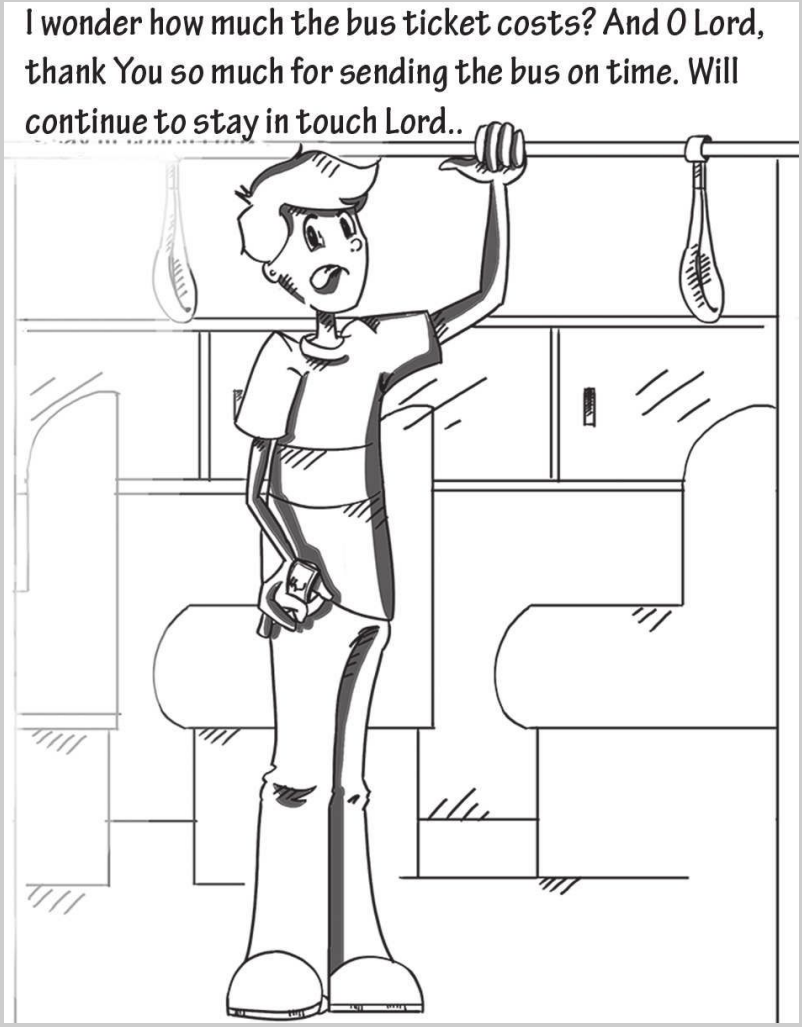
James 5:16-18
Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

I Kings 18:1, 41-46
And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth." Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again." Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. Then the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Even though it was God who said that He was going to send rain, and hence sent Elijah to announce the arrival of rain—Elijah still had to go to Mount Carmel—and pray earnestly, fervently, until he saw the signs of the coming rain. Similarly, although God reveals to us what His will is, and what He intends to accomplish, we must pray through with faith until we see the answer released on the earth.

Developing a Consistent Prayer Life

- Set aside regular times for prayer.
- Pray throughout the day—walk in communion with the Lord. "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks ..." (I Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- Take "time out"—Develop your personal prayer life, by setting aside consistent times of being alone with God, one or more days set aside for seeking God.
- Meet with others to join in group or corporate prayer, e.g. cell groups, all night prayer.
- Pray with confidence—knowing God hears you when you pray.
- Exercise the prayer of asking and receiving—follow through to see if your answers have come. If not, reflect, learn and keep developing yourself in this area.



KEY MEMORY VERSES

Jeremiah 29:12
Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

Philippians 4:6, 7
Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I John 3:21, 22
Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

APPLICATION

1. What is 'PRAYER' to you? What are some of the insights you have gained on prayer from this lesson?

2. What are the 3 key foundations for prayer?

3. List the different kinds of prayer and how and when you would use those kinds of prayers.

4. What are some of the things that hinder you from "praying without ceasing?" What changes can you make, to stay in communion with the Lord at all times?

(Additional Reading: APC Publication — *The Wonderful Benefits of Praying in Tongues)*

USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.
YOUTUBE: https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore
WEBSITE: https://apcwo.org/live

Our other websites and free resources:
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